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Appl. No. 10/067,442

Response dated July 25, 2006

Reply to Office Action of May 19, 2006

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 - 8, 10, 12 - 19, 21, 23 - 28, 30 - 38, 42 - 49, 51, 53 - 58 and 60 - 72 are in the application for consideration. Reconsideration of the application is requested in view of the statements appearing below herein.

1. Claims 1 - 8, 10, 12 - 19, 21, 23 - 28, 30 - 38, 42 - 49, 51, 53 - 58 and 60 - 72 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable in view of U.S. Patent 6,832,526 B2 ("Howard et al.").

It should be noted here that although the Office Action states that the claims "...are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by" Howard et al. (see page 2 of the Office Action) the accompanying comments make it clear that a Section 103 obviousness rejection is intended and applicant's response will be made with that understanding.

Applicant traverses this ground of rejection. The reference does not teach or suggest applicant's claimed subject matter within the meaning of Section 103.

Applicant's invention, as recited in claim 1, relates to a computer implemented method for registering a device, such as a printer, with the manufacturer of the device without requiring information identifying the user such as the user's name and address. The user of the device provides input to the device such as by

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pressing a button on the device. The user input does not include information identifying the user. In response to the user input the device transmits a registration request message to a registration server which receives the message and in response registers the device.

The Office Action acknowledges that the reference does not disclose all the features of the claimed method, namely registering the device with the manufacturer. Instead, the examiner has relied on the fact that the reference teaches verifying the warranty (column 7, lines 36 - 40). However, the present claims do not recite performing this step.

The disclosure of Howard et al. at column 7, lines 36 - 40, describes standard software (an installer 22) that is installed in a computer when a new device such as a printer is installed. Typically, the installer is provided on a CD or other medium provided with the device. The installer 22 installs software on the host system 20 (the computer) such as a device driver 26 for the device.

Howard et al. states that "The installer 22 may also interactively provide the user with merchandising information associated with the external device 30, such as verification of warranty registration and software license agreements." (column 7, lines 36 - 40). This is the only sentence in the reference that the examiner has relied upon to complete the obviousness rejection.

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This sentence appears to say that the installer software 22 can verify whether the user has registered the warranty for the device with the manufacturer. The reference does not say anything else as to how this might be done. One could imagine that the installer software might query the user whether the warranty has previously been registered with the manufacturer and, if the response is in the negative, the installer could remind the user to do so. The reminder could be to send the warranty to the manufacturer by mail.

However, Howard et al. does not provide any details as to how the verification process would work or suggest that the installer software 22 would itself register the device 30 with the manufacturer which is what is required by claim 1. Instead, the reference only discloses using the installer software 22 to verify whether the user has registered the device warranty.

As pointed out previously, the examiner has acknowledged that Howard et al. does not expressly disclose registering the device with the manufacturer and has instead asserted that "As the [warranty registration] status is checked, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide a mechanism for registering the warranty in case it has not been registered yet." The examiner has not pointed to any explicit or implicit motivation for combining this limitation with the teachings of Howard et al.

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Nevertheless, even if the installer software 22 were to register the device warranty with the manufacturer, a warranty must include the user's name, address, etc. The purpose of filling out the warranty form and providing it to the manufacturer is to create a record of who owns the product. This information is not required by applicant's claims.

The claims state explicitly that the input provided by the user does not include information identifying the user. In other words, the claimed registration method does not require providing information identifying the user to the manufacturer. For example, according to applicant's method the user could register the printer simply by pressing the button on the printer and without providing the name, address, etc. of the user. This is a completely different method from any method of registering a warranty or verifying the prior registration of a warranty that might be disclosed or suggested by Howard et al.

For all the foregoing reasons, the claims are patentably distinguishable over the disclosure of Howard et al. Reconsideration of the rejection and withdrawal thereof are respectfully requested.

In summary, claims 1 - 8, 10, 12 - 19, 21, 23 - 28, 30 - 38, 42 - 49, 51, 53 - 58 and 60 - 72 are proper in form for allowance and in substance have been shown to be directed to wholly novel and patentable subject

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matter. Reconsideration of the application and allowance
of the claims are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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